

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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C1 1 A windshield assembly comprising:
a windshield panel movable between an operative position and an inoperative position; and

a coupling assembly coupled to said windshield panel, said coupling assembly including at least one coupling member that enables said windshield panel to move between the operative position and the inoperative position.

2. The windshield assembly according to claim 1, wherein said coupling assembly includes a first end defining a mounting bracket and a second end defining a pivot point about which the windshield panel pivots.

3 The windshield assembly according to claim 2, wherein said second end includes ratchet washers that allow one-way movement only.

4. The windshield assembly according to claim 1, wherein said inoperative position is toward a rear side of said windshield panel.

5. The windshield assembly according to claim 1, wherein said inoperative position is toward a front side of said windshield panel.

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C2 6. The windshield assembly according to claim 1, wherein said windshield panel is made of polycarbonate plastic.

7. The windshield assembly according to claim 1, further comprising a handguard element connected to said windshield panel.

8. The windshield assembly according to claim 7, wherein said handguard element includes a central portion and a pair of hand protecting members integrally extending from opposite sides of said central portion.

9. The windshield assembly according to claim 7, wherein said handguard element is made of plastic.

10. The windshield assembly according to claim 7, further comprising at least one bracket assembly that mounts the windshield panel.

11. The windshield assembly according to claim 10, wherein said at least one bracket assembly comprise a T-shaped element having a vertical section and a horizontal section, said vertical section including at least one fastening hole defined therein that enables at least one fastener to pass therethrough, and said horizontal section including at least one fastening hole defined therein that enable at least one fastener to pass therethrough.

12. The windshield assembly according to claim 11, wherein said windshield panel is attached to said vertical section of said T-shaped element via at least one fastener that passes through at least one hole defined in said windshield panel and said fastening hole defined in said vertical section.

13. The windshield assembly according to claim 11, wherein said handguard element is attached to said horizontal section of said T-shaped element via at least one fastener that pass through said holes defined in said handguard element and said fastening hole defined in said horizontal section.

14. The windshield assembly according to claim 11, wherein at least a portion of the windshield panel is transparent.

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C3 15. A vehicle comprising:
a frame;
a plurality of wheels suspended from the frame;
a handlebar operatively connected to the wheels to steer the vehicle;
a seat positioned on the frame; and
a windshield assembly mounted on the frame and including a windshield panel movable between an operative position and an inoperative position, and a coupling assembly between the handlebar and the windshield panel, said coupling assembly including at least one coupling member that enables said windshield panel to move between the operative position and the inoperative position.

16. The vehicle according to claim 15, wherein said coupling assembly includes a first end defining a mounting bracket and a second end defining a pivot point about which the windshield panel pivots.

(17) The vehicle according to claim 16, wherein said second end includes ratchet washers that allow one-way movement only.

18. The vehicle according to claim 15, wherein said inoperative position is toward a rear side of said windshield panel and toward the seat.

19. The vehicle according to claim 15, wherein said inoperative position is toward a front side of said windshield panel and away from the seat.

20. The vehicle according to claim 15, wherein said windshield panel is made out of polycarbonate plastic.

21. The vehicle according to claim 15, further comprising a handguard element connected to said windshield panel.

22. The vehicle according to claim 21, wherein said handguard element includes a central portion and a pair of hand protecting members integrally extending from opposite sides of said central portion.

23. The vehicle according to claim 21, wherein said handguard element is made of plastic.

24. The vehicle according to claim 21, further comprising at least one bracket assembly for mounting the windshield panel to the handguard element.

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23. The vehicle according to claim 24, wherein said at least one bracket assembly comprises a T-shaped element having a vertical section and a horizontal section, said vertical section of said T-shaped element includes a fastening hole defined therein that enables a fastener to pass therethrough, said horizontal section including a fastening hole defined therein that enable a fastener to pass therethrough.

26. The vehicle according to claim 25, wherein said windshield panel is attached to said vertical section of said T-shaped element via a fastener that passes through a fastening hole defined in said windshield panel and a fastening hole defined in said vertical section.

27. The vehicle according to claim 25, wherein said handguard element is attached to said horizontal section of said T-shaped element via a fastener that pass through said fastening hole defined in said handguard element and said fastening hole defined in said horizontal section.

28. The vehicle according to claim 21, wherein the handguard element is formed integrally with the windshield panel.

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29. The vehicle according to claim 15, wherein said vehicle is an all terrain vehicle.

30. The vehicle according to claim 15, wherein said vehicle is a snowmobile.

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